

MICHIGAN SUPREME COURT ANNUAL REPORT 2001

JUDICIAL ACTIVITY AND CASELOAD

The primary function of the court system is to decide cases. In general, cases begin in the trial courts. Some categories of cases may be appealed to the Michigan Court of Appeals. The Michigan

Supreme Court is the highest appellate court and hears appeals primarily from decisions of the Michigan Court of Appeals.



Descriptions of the appellate courts and the trial courts are provided on the following pages along with case filing information.

Michigan Supreme Court

The Supreme Court is Michigan's court of last resort, consisting of seven justices. Cases come before the Court during a term that starts August 1 and runs through July 31 of the following year. The Court hears oral arguments in Lansing beginning in October of each term. Decisions are released throughout the term, following oral arguments.

Supreme Court justices are elected for eight-year terms. Candidates are nominated by political parties and are elected on a nonpartisan ballot. Two justices are elected every two years (one in the eighth year) in the November election. Supreme Court candidates must be qualified electors, licensed to practice law in Michigan, and at the time of election must be under 70 years of age. The justices' salary is fixed by the State Officers Compensation Commission and paid by the state. Vacancies are filled by appointment of the Governor until the next general election. Every two years, the justices of the Court elect a member of the Court as chief justice.

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Each year, the Supreme Court receives over 2,000 applications for leave to appeal from litigants primarily seeking review of decisions by the Michigan Court of Appeals. Each justice is responsible for reviewing each case to determine whether leave should be granted. The Court issues a decision in all cases filed with the Clerk's Office. Cases that are not accepted for oral argument may be decided by an order, with or without an opinion. These orders may affirm or reverse the Michigan Court of Appeals, may remand a case to the trial court, or may adopt a correct Court of Appeals opinion.

The Supreme Court's authority to hear cases is discretionary. The Court grants leave to those cases of greatest complexity and public import, where additional briefing and oral argument are essential to reaching a just outcome.

In 2001, there were 2,291 cases filed in the Supreme Court. During the year, the Court disposed of 2,359 cases. Of the 2,291 new filings, 40% were civil and 60% were criminal cases. The Court completed 68 more cases than were filed in 2001 and decreased the pending caseload. Pending cases have been reduced from 2,162 in 1997 to 1,070 in 2001. The Court disposed of 724 motions by order in 2001.



2001 BENCH

CHIEF JUSTICE

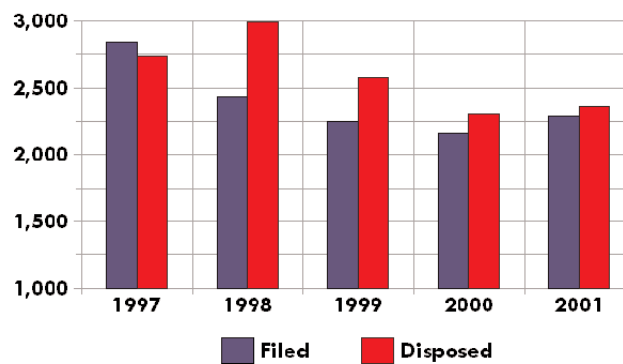
Maura D. Corrigan

JUSTICES

Michael F. Cavanagh
Elizabeth A. Weaver
Marilyn Kelly
Clifford W. Taylor
Robert P. Young, Jr.
Stephen J. Markman

TRENDS IN SUPREME COURT CASES FILED AND DISPOSED

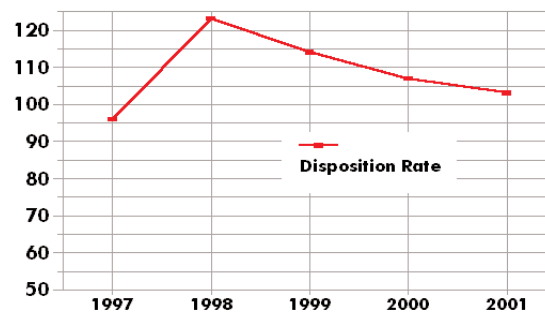
	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001
Cases Filed	2,847	2,436	2,246	2,159	2,291
Cases Disposed	2,736	2,992	2,571	2,302	2,359



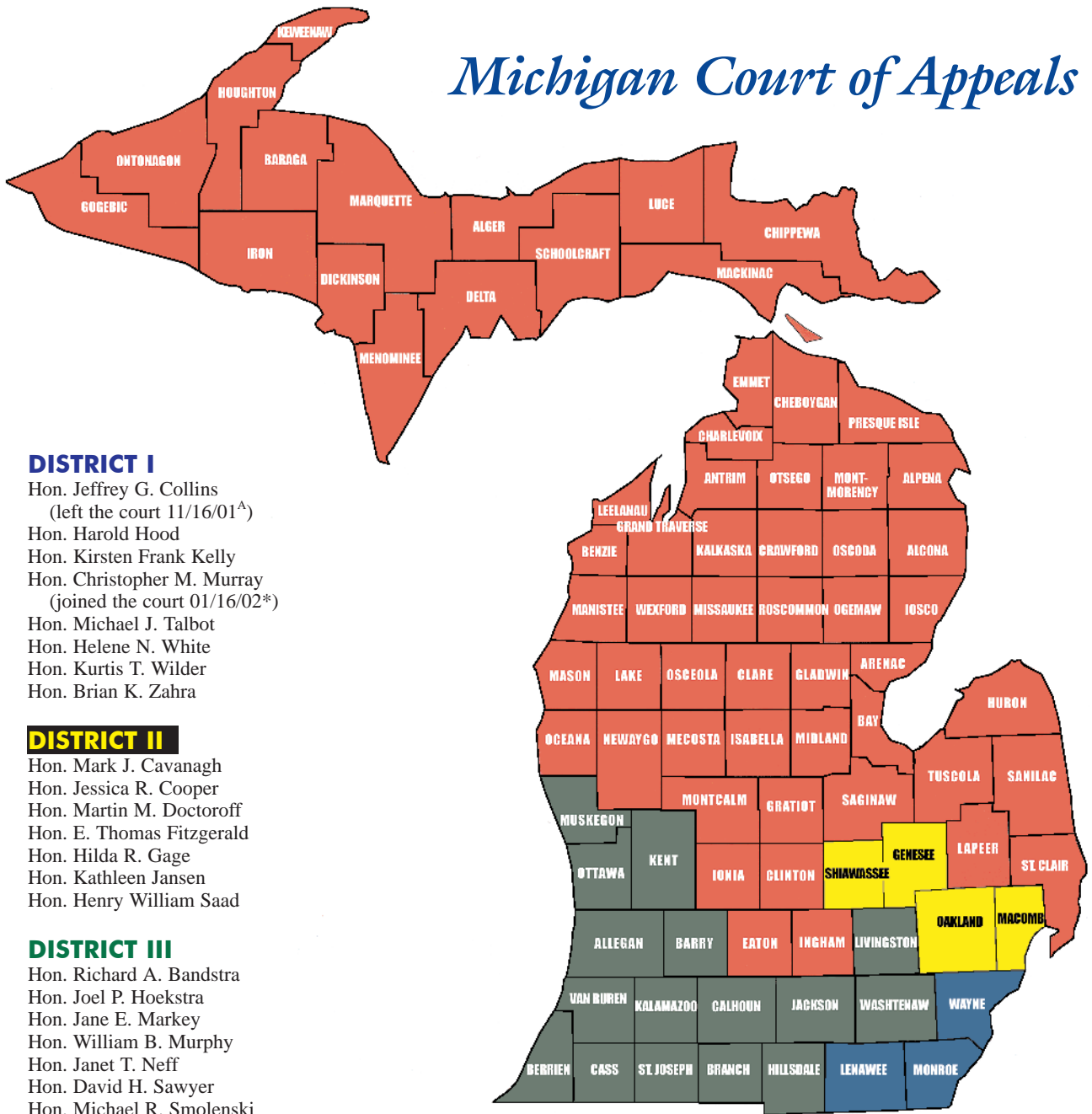
TRENDS IN DISPOSITION RATE

	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001
Disposition Rate*	96	123	114	107	103

*Cases disposed yearly per 100 new filings



Michigan Court of Appeals



Court of Appeals districts in 2001. Legislature created new Court of Appeals districts effective 03/22/2002.

KEY	* Appointed to succeed another judge	F Deceased
	A Appointed to another position	G Grandfathered
D Defeated	O Mandatory retirement	R Retired
E Elected to another court	S Resigned	T Term expired

District I

District II

District III

District IV

Michigan Court of Appeals

The Court of Appeals is the intermediate appellate court between the trial courts and the Michigan Supreme Court. While the Court of Appeals was created by the 1963 Michigan Constitution, its jurisdiction is established by statute. Court of Appeals' practice and procedure are governed by Michigan Court Rules set by the Supreme Court.

Court of Appeals judges are chosen in nonpartisan elections from four districts drawn by the Legislature on county lines. The districts are as nearly as possible of equal population. The Legislature may increase the number of judges and alter the districts from which they are elected by changing the state law. A candidate for the Court of Appeals must be a lawyer admitted to practice for at least five years, under 70 years of age, a qualified elector, and a resident of the district in which the candidate is running.

Court of Appeals judges are elected for six-year terms. Their salaries are set by the Legislature. The Supreme Court chooses a chief judge for the Court of Appeals every two years.

A candidate for the Court of Appeals must be a lawyer admitted to practice for at least five years, under 70 years of age, a qualified elector, and a resident of the district in which the candidate is running.

*In 2001,
7,102 cases
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Court of
Appeals.*

Panels of Court of Appeals judges hear cases in Lansing, Detroit, Grand Rapids, and Marquette. Panels are rotated to avoid the possibility that conflicting legal philosophies will develop in specific geographical areas. The decision of a Court of Appeals panel is final except for those cases that the Supreme Court reviews.

The Court of Appeals hears both civil and criminal cases. Persons convicted of a criminal offense other than by a guilty plea have an appeal by right under the state constitution, if the appeal complies with the Michigan Court Rules.

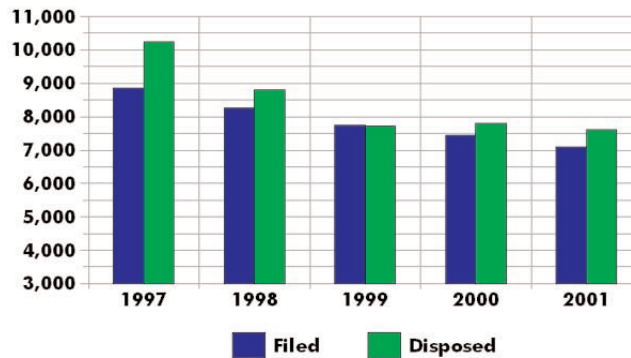
In 2001, 7,102 cases were filed with the Court of Appeals. This represents a decrease of 5% (358) over the 7,460 cases filed in 2000.

In 2001, the Court of Appeals disposed of 7,606 cases, a decrease of 2% (193) over the 7,799 cases disposed in 2000. Of the dispositions, 4,468 (59%) were by order and 3,138 (41%) were by opinion.

JUDICIAL ACTIVITY AND CASELOAD

TRENDS IN COURT OF APPEALS FILINGS AND DISPOSITIONS

	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001
Filed	8,866	8,264	7,731	7,460	7,102
Disposed	10,242	8,806	7,715	7,799	7,606



TRENDS IN DISPOSITION RATE AND CASE AGE

	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001
Disposition Rate*	116	107	100	105	107
% Cases < 18 Months Old	90%	89%	86%	84%	84%

*Cases disposed yearly per 100 new filings

